IN THE CLAIMS:

1.-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A stretchable conveyor belt ~~having~~ comprising:

an intermediate portion having a thickness portion, a width extending normal to a lengthwise direction of the belt and having widthwise opposite ends, and at least one void in said thickness portion, each said at least one void ~~which is provided in an intermediate portion of the belt as seen in a direction of thickness thereof, which extends in a widthwise direction of the belt, and which is~~ gradually ~~widened~~ widening in at least one direction toward at least one of the widthwise opposite ends ~~of the belt, and~~

wherein ~~the~~ each said at least one void ~~provides a~~ is for imparting elasticity to ~~stretchability of the conveyor~~ belt.

6. (Currently Amended) A stretchable conveyor belt ~~according to claim 4, further comprising~~ comprising:

widthwise portions extending normal to a lengthwise direction length of the belt, each said widthwise portion comprising an intermediate portion having a thickness portion and at least one void in said thickness portion and located at a regular interval of distance in the lengthwise direction of the belt, wherein said at least one void provides elasticity to the belt; and

at least one pair of first and second flexible reinforcing threads ~~which~~ that extend in the lengthwise direction of the belt, and which ~~include~~ comprise a plurality of first curved or bent portions and a plurality of second curved or bent portions, respectively, in the lengthwise direction, such that the first curved or bent portions and the second curved or bent portions have opposite phases, respectively, and ~~are turned~~ wrap around the voids, respectively.

7.-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A stretchable conveyor belt comprising:

widthwise ~~opposite end~~ portions ~~which are adapted to be supported~~extending normal to a lengthwise direction of the belt for support by respective rollers, ~~and~~ each ~~of which has~~said widthwise portion comprising an intermediate portion having a thickness portion and at least one void in ~~an intermediate portion thereof as seen in a direction of thickness thereof~~said thickness portion, wherein ~~the~~ each said at least one void ~~provides a stretchability~~is for imparting elasticity to ~~of said~~ each of the widthwise ~~opposite end~~ portions of the belt; and

a plurality of wires ~~which provide~~that extend in a widthwise direction of the belt and comprise at least one layer on at least a ~~lower~~ first side of ~~the~~ said at least one void of ~~said~~ each of the widthwise ~~opposite end~~ portions of the belt, wherein the wires ~~provide a~~are for imparting transverse rigidity ~~of~~ to the belt.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The stretchable conveyor belt according to claim 18, further comprising a widthwise central portion of the belt and a plurality of recesses, wherein ~~the conveyor belt has,~~ in each of respective ~~lower~~ first surfaces of respective portions of the belt that are nearer than the respective voids of the widthwise ~~opposite end~~ portions of the ~~belt, to a~~ belt to said widthwise central portion of the belt, ~~a~~ said plurality of recesses ~~which~~ extend in the widthwise direction of the belt and are ~~provided~~ located at ~~a~~ regular ~~interval~~ intervals of distance in the lengthwise direction of the belt, and wherein the recesses ~~cooperate~~ are for cooperating with the voids to ~~provide a stretchability of~~ impart elasticity to the belt.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The stretchable conveyor belt according to claim 18, ~~wherein~~ further comprising a widthwise central portion of the belt ~~has a stretchability owing to an elasticity of rubber.~~ comprising rubber and being elastic.

21.-26. (Cancelled)

27. (New) The stretchable conveyor belt according to claim 18, wherein the plurality of wires comprise two layers on the first side and a second side of the void of each of the widthwise portions of the belt, respectively.

28. (New) The stretchable conveyor belt according to claim 18, wherein the plurality of wires comprise at least one layer on the first side of a plurality of voids of each of the widthwise portions of the belt with no layers in a widthwise central portion of the belt, and wherein the belt further comprises a plurality of transverse rigid plates that extend in the widthwise direction of the belt and are located at a regular interval of distance in the length wise direction of the belt such that each of the transverse rigid plates is located between two adjacent voids of the plurality of voids, wherein the transverse rigid plates cooperate with the wires to provide the transverse rigidity of the belt.